A

SERMON

Occaſioned by the Sudden

DEATH

OF

The REVEREND and LEARNED

ZEPHANIAH MARRYAT, D.D.

PREACHED

In *SOUTHWARK*, *September* the 22d.

By *THOMAS HALL*.

To which is added,

The FUNERAL ORATION

at his INTERMENT,

By *THOMAS TOWLE*.

Both Publiſhed at the People's Requeſt.

LONDON:

Printed for J. BUCKLAND, in *Pater-noſter-Row*; T. FIELD, in *Cheapſide*; E. DILLY, in the *Poultry*; and A. MASON, in *Fore-Street*. MDCCLIV.

(Price Eight-Pence.)

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OF

LUKE xii. 43.

Bleſſed is that Servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, ſhall find ſo doing.

THE mournful Appearance of this Aſſembly ſhews it to be needleſs for me, to declare what melancholy Providence has given Occaſion for my diſcourſing upon theſe Words at this Time. It is more neceſſary I ſhould remind you of the Privilege of Believers, in that they may find ſomething in the Word of GOD, wonderfully adapted for their Support under the moſt grieving Event that can befal them: For it is therein written, that *all Things work together for Good, to them that love GOD, to them who are the Called according to his Purpoſe (a).*

Freſh Inſtances of our Mortality daily occur; yet in general we are little affected with them. But by the *Death* of ſerious uſeful *Chriſtians*, and of eminently laborious and ſerviceable *Miniſters* of our Acquaintance, a very ſenſible Conviction is frequently renewed, that *all Fleſh is as Graſs (b)*; that *our Fathers* have *no Abiding (c)*; and that *the Prophets do not live for ever (d).*

(a) Rom. viii. 28. (b) 1 Pet. i. 24. (c) 1 Chron. xxix. 15. (d) Zech. i. 5.

However, under theſe afflictive Diſpenſations, we have various Arguments to comfort us. One is, an Aſſurance that *the Word of the Lord abideth for ever* (*e*); and particularly, that CHRIST, the eſſential WORD, is always *the ſame* (*f*); that He *walketh in the Midſt of the golden Candleſticks* (*g*), to obſerve the State and ſupply the Wants of his Churches: And when *one Angel* is called away, He can quickly ſend *another*, that the Word of the Goſpel may be continually preached through a Succeſſion of faithful Miniſters.

But though what I have now mentioned be the grand Support of a Believer, yet there is another very mollifying and quieting Conſideration, which upon the preſent Occaſion may very juſtly, and with a remarkable Propriety, be urged to alleviate the Sorrow of the ſurviving Chriſtian Friends and dear Relatives of the Deceaſed. And this is taken from *the Bleſſedneſs* of them *that die in the Lord*, who *reſt from their Labours* (*h*), and to whom *an Entrance* is *miniſtred abundantly into the everlaſting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt* (*i*).

And where have we known Inſtances of any among our own Acquaintance, whether in a private or publick Character, who, when they departed, have left us a plainer Teſtimony of their *dying in the Lord*, than what was given by *that Servant of Chriſt* whoſe Death we are now lamenting? For the Deceaſed, under the moſt

(*e*) 1 Pet. i. 25. (*f*) Heb. xiii. 8. (*g*) Rev. ii. 1.
(*h*) Rev. xiv. 13. (*i*) 2 Pet. i. 11.

moſt ſenſible and ſolemn Views of the near Approach of Death, often expreſſed a full Aſſurance that *he was going to Heaven:* Yea, he was ſo ready and deſirous to be gone, that he ſometimes ſignified, he ſhould have been *uneaſy to be detained*, but for his dutiful Submiſſion to the Will of his Heavenly Father, and the Proſpect and Hope that by his longer Abode, and patient Continuance in his Maſter's Work here, he might through the Divine Bleſſing be a happy Inſtrument of engaging others to *go with him*, or of exciting them to prepare to *come quickly after him.*

With reſpect then to Thoſe, who have been *ſet as Seals* to the Divine Truths which he preached, and who through Grace were either *converted*, or after Converſion were greatly *edified* and comforted under his evangelical Miniſtry, though they cannot but deeply lament *their own heavy Loſs*, yet they muſt allow, they have Reaſon to rejoice in *his unſpeakable Gain.*——Eſpecially when they conſider, that in the very *Manner of his Removal* he was favoured with a ſpecial and remarkable *Anſwer to his own Prayers.* For he had often expreſſed a great Deſire, that if it pleaſed GOD *his Life might not be lengthened beyond his Capacity for ſome Uſefulneſs.* And this Requeſt, it has been obſerved, he preſented at the Footſtool of the Throne of Grace, more frequently, and with greater Importunity of late than ever.——His Petition herein was granted. For after he had been employed on the *Morning* of the *laſt Sabbath*

bath in *preaching Chriſt* publickly and with great Vivacity *upon Earth*, he was *before Night* called hence to *praiſe Him* with the moſt raiſed Affection *in Heaven*. And who can conceive the Triumph and Joy, which muſt attend ſuch a delightful Change, when *ſudden Death* is *ſudden Glory!*

Our preſent Duty is to conſider, what ſuitable *Improvement* we ſhould make of *this awful Stroke*. It muſt be acknowledged to be a Matter of the greateſt Importance, that *we be ready alſo*; as there can otherwiſe be no Room for an Expectation, that we ſhall ſhare in that *Honour*, which the *Parable* declares ſhall at laſt be the *Bleſſedneſs* of every *good Steward*, but not of any elſe.

Here perhaps the like *Queſtion* with that which *Peter* put to *Chriſt (k)*, may be ſtarted by ſome to this Purpoſe, *viz.* "Does what is here ſaid "concerning the *Honour* of the *faithful Stew-* "*ard*, relate to *Miniſters only*, or even unto "*others?*"

By a careful Attention to the *Context*, I humbly conceive, it will appear, that the *Advancement* here foretold belongs to *all GOD's faithful Servants*, whatever be their preſent Station in the Church, whether as *Miniſters*, or *People*.

Yet becauſe the *Miniſters of the Goſpel* are in a particular and emphatical Manner termed *Stewards of the Myſteries of GOD*, and it peculiarly or eminently belongs to their Office *to feed*

(*k*) Ver. 41.

ſeed the People with Knowledge and Underſtanding, hence ſome may be ready to think, that the Caſe in the *Parable* is applicable to *Miniſters only*.

But we may obſerve, that *Chriſt* is here ſpeaking *parabolically*, and thus teaching what *Dignity* and *Honour* ſhall at laſt be conferred upon *the faithful Steward*; of whom it is declared, that though he be not now, yet hereafter he ſhall be made *Ruler over his Lord's Houſhold, to give them their Portion of Meat in due Seaſon (l)*. And in this figurative Language, we have a beautiful but general Deſcription of the *Advancement* and *Glory*, which the *faithful Diſciples of Chriſt* ſhall receive in the future State.

This, I apprehend, is the juſt Light, in which this Paſſage ſhould be viewed. And thus it ſets forth *a Reward* that is *future*, without having any direct or immediate Reference to the *particular Work* or ſpecial Buſineſs itſelf, about which *the faithful Steward* is at preſent employed.

The Deſign of the *Parable* then is to inſtruct us, that *every Chriſtian*, whether in a publick or private Station, who now ſerves the LORD with Diligence and Faithfulneſs, ſhall be richly *rewarded* in the World above, and be there raiſed to ſome very honourable and ſignal Preferment. As when *Joſeph* was advanced, he was *ſet over Pharaoh's Houſe*, and *over all the Land of Egypt (m)*: In like Manner, *every Servant*

(*l*) Ver. 42. (*m*) Gen. xli. 40, 41.

Servant of GOD who now faithfully employs the *Talents* committed to him, whether they be many or few, ſhall at laſt *be made Ruler over many Things* (*n*); yea, in the *Verſe after the Text* it is ſaid, *His Lord will make him Ruler over all that He hath.*

And thus a ſtrong Aſſurance is given us of the *Bleſſedneſs* of *all Thoſe*, who upon the ſtricteſt Search *at their Lord's Coming* ſhall be found to have acted an upright, conſcientious, and *faithful* Part *in the Matters of their GOD.*

From the Words thus opened, as they ſtand in a Connection with the *Context*, I might juſtly enlarge upon *many Heads:* But by Reaſon of the Limits of the preſent Diſcourſe, I can only touch upon *theſe Four.*

I. That *every Man* has *ſome Talent* given him by the Great GOD, to be employed to the Divine Glory.—This is ſuppoſed in the *Parable* where the *Text* lies, and is clearly taught by *our Lord* in another (*o*).

II. That by the Grace of GOD *ſome* are made *faithful Servants.* —— Theſe are the *bleſſed Perſons* here intended in the *Text* itſelf.

III. That *preſent Faithfulneſs* to GOD is a ſure Preſage of *future Bleſſedneſs.* — For every *faithful Servant* is here pronounced infallibly *bleſſed.*

IV. That

(*n*) Mat. xxv. 21, 23. (*o*) Mat. xxv. 14, *& ſeq.*

IV. That it is a ſpecial Privilege, when any *Servant of the Lord* is favoured with *a Capacity* of attending upon *publick Worſhip*, and engaging in the *Work* and *Service of the Lord*, until the Day of his Death.——*Bleſſed is that Servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, ſhall find ſo doing.*

Theſe are weighty Subjects, fit for the Pulpit at any Time; but are peculiarly ſeaſonable upon this very ſolemn and awful Occaſion. Let us conſider then the Points that have been offered, and obſerve,

I. That *every Man* has *ſome Talent* given him by the great GOD, to be employed to the Divine Glory.

There is indeed a vaſt *Variety*, as to the Kind, Meaſure, and Number of *the Talents*, with which different Perſons are intruſted.——But here I muſt obſerve, what is generally too little regarded, *(viz.)* That at the firſt Creation of Man, *many* precious and invaluable *Talents* were committed to us *in common*, and lodged with *Adam*, as the *federal Head*, as the conſtituted and publick *Repreſentative* of all his Poſterity: But by Reaſon of our Relation to him, *through his Apoſtacy* our happieſt *Privileges*, even the Rectitude of our Nature, with its Capacity to worſhip GOD aright, and to hold a friendly, holy, and delightful Communion with him, were *utterly loſt*

beyond all Recovery by the beſt Endeavours of any meer Creature. Yea, *a Forfeiture* was incurred of the *Bleſſing* of *every Privilege*, which, through the Divine Forbearance, upon any Conſideration, was ſtill continued to us. So that with Regard to any holy and proper Uſe, that in our preſent *fallen State* we can make of *any of the Talents* originally given to our Nature, *the Guilt* of their having been ſquandered away and embezzled is juſtly *chargeable upon every Man*, that was comprehended and included in the *Covenant* made with *Adam*; as all his Progeny were.——And it is a very melancholly Evidence of *a ſad Defection* from the Truths of *Divine Revelation*, and the good old *Proteſtant Faith*, that there are now *many* in the Land, who pretend that *we* are not *concerned in*, and cannot therefore be *culpable for*, the wicked *Embezzlement* of our *firſt Father*, and common Parent. Thus it is in ſome other Caſes: For the *Children of Traitors* ſeldom care to acknowledge, or hear of, *the Taint of their Blood.*

The Vanity of ſuch is manifeſt from the Aſſurance which the *Scripture* gives us, that *by one Man's* (even *Adam's*) *Diſobedience* and Unfaithfulneſs, others, yea *many* others, even all his Offſpring, *were made Sinners (p).* And were it ſo, that we had to account for the *Miſimprovement* of no other *Talents*, but thoſe which we *ſinned away in Adam*, yet, without an *Intereſt in Chriſt*, we ſhould be *condemned* at the Judgment of the great Day; and muſt then *ſuffer the Puniſhment* which the

(p) Rom. v. 19.

the righteous Sanction of *the Law* requires to be inflicted upon *a Steward*, in the Balance of whoſe Accounts there is an *utter Deficiency*, occaſioned by the baſeſt Injuſtice and vileſt Iniquity committed againſt his heavenly Lord and Maſter, the great Proprietor, and Supreme Governor of all. ——Happy they, who by the Spirit of GOD are deeply *convinced of theſe Things* in a humbling Manner, according to the Inſtructions of his Word! And happy ſure are they, who are enabled to lay to Heart *this original Unfaithfulneſs* of our Nature, ſo as gladly to *flee to Chriſt*, to hide them from the Guilt and Imputation of it!

But however too many, through the Blindneſs, Pride, and Hardneſs of their Hearts, dare to *diſpute* or *deny* the Scripture-Doctrine of *the Fall of Man*; yet it muſt be allowed by all, that *every Individual*, who is ſpared till he can *diſcern betwixt his Right-Hand and his Left*, does perſonally receive *ſome Talents*, for which he is accountable to his Maker.—And as to *ourſelves*, whatever our Extract or Education has been, we muſt acknowledge, that *many are the Talents* which we receive at the Hand of GOD: Though theſe are given *to every Man according to his ſeveral Ability (q)*, as the Lord ſees fit.

I may here point you, to *Life* itſelf, to our *natural Capacities*, and to our *Opportunity of learning* the Knowledge and Fear of the Lord; yea, though it were only from the Books of Creation and Providence.

(q) Mat. xxv. 15.

For if any were trained up, whether at Home or Abroad, in ſuch an ignorant and dark Way, that they had not *the Knowledge of GOD's Law* as written in the Bible; yet they had *the Work of the Law* ſo far *written in their Hearts*, and by Reaſon of their very Formation and daily Protection they were ſo much *a Law unto themſelves (r)*, as rendered all their Diſobedience, Wickedneſs, and Rebellion againſt GOD, utterly *inexcuſable*.

But I preſume the moſt, if not all here preſent, were born in a *Chriſtian Land*, and educated in the *Chriſtian Faith*. Many therefore are the precious *Talents*, with which we have been intruſted. —— Such, for Inſtance, were the *early Inſtructions* given us by our *religious Parents*, or *pious Maſters*, in our younger Days: And ſuch have been our many Years Enjoyment of *peaceable Sabbaths*; our *Liberty* of ſtatedly attending the *Worſhip of GOD*, and the pure Adminiſtration of Goſpel-Ordinances, in the *publick Aſſemblies* of his People; and the *Liberty* likewiſe, of joining in *ſocial Worſhip* in the *Family*, as well as of performing the *ſecret Duties* of Religion in the *Cloſet*, or Places of Retirement.

Theſe are the valuable *Talents*, which have been put into the Hands of thoſe, whoſe *merciful Lot* it has been, to dwell in *religious Families*. And has not this been the Privilege of many of us, ever ſince we can remember?

Farther,

(r) Rom. ii. 14, 15.

Farther, among our *Talents* muſt be reckoned, *all the Advantages* which attend our *temporal Condition*, or outward Circumſtances in Life: Our Health and Strength, the free Exerciſe of our intellectual Powers, the Peace and Plenty, the Safety and Comforts which we enjoy; and all the various Relations in Life in which Providence has placed us, together with all the Opportunities that ariſe from them, either of receiving or doing Good.

Yea, of this Number we muſt alſo reckon *all the Attainments* and *Abilities*, which may help to make us a Bleſſing to the *Church*, uſeful to *Civil Societies*, or any way ſerviceable to our *Fellow-Creatures*. All theſe Advantages, Gifts, or Allotments of Providence, are placed to our Account by the great GOD, the Author and Donor of them all, as *Talents* with which we are bound to honour Him.

And the ſame muſt be ſaid of *all afflictive Diſpenſations*, deſigned and ſuited to *purge away our Tin and Droſs* (*s*), and to make us abound in *the peaceable Fruits of Righteouſneſs*.

But who can pretend to reckon up *all his* particular *Receipts* from the Father of Mercies? — Happy the Perſons, who with their *many Talents* do receive *the Spirit of Grace*, that they may be enabled to profit by all! For *if any Man have not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of His* (*t*); nor can he be *that faithful and wiſe Steward*, who ſhall meet with *his Lord's Approbation* at his Coming.

(*s*) Iſai. i. 25. (*t*) Rom. viii. 9.

Coming. This will be ſhewn particularly under the next Head, in which it was obſerved,

II. That by the Grace of GOD *ſome* are made *faithful Servants.*

That *all* who are called *GOD's Servants* are not *faithful*, I might inſtance in *Nebuchadnezzar* (*u*), and ſome others: But the *Parable* ſuppoſes, that there are *ſome* to whom this Character belongs; yet it intimates, that their Number is but ſmall. The *interrogatory* Mode of Expreſſion which *our Lord* uſes in the *Verſe before the Text*, directs us to look upon the *faithful Steward*, as one diſtinguiſhed from others, or as one that *feared GOD above many* (*w*): And when *Chriſt* ſays in the Text, *Bleſſed is that Servant*, this ſhews him to be a Man greatly beloved, *highly favoured*, and bleſſed of GOD. And thus it is ſuggeſted, that it was to be aſcribed entirely to the *Grace* and *Favour of GOD*, that he became *faithful.*

Under this Head I ſhall attempt two Things.

1. I ſhall open the *Character* of the *Servant* that is *faithful* to his GOD. And then,

2. Shew, that it is *by the Grace of GOD* that any Man is *enabled* to anſwer *this Character.*

By

(*u*) Jer. xxv. 9. xxvii. 6. xliii. 10.
(*w*) Neh. vii. 2.

By theſe it will appear, who is the *faithful Servant*, and how it is that he *becomes ſo*.

1. I ſhall open the *Character* of the *Servant* that is *faithful* to GOD.

Here I think it may be ſome Help, to conſider in general the *Character* of a *Servant*, that is reckoned *faithful* to an *earthly Maſter*.——He is one, that is ſtrictly juſt and honeſt, that will neither wrong his Maſter himſelf, nor agree or conſent that he ſhould be wronged by others. ——He is one, who in all Things ſincerely aims to be true to his Truſt, and who, to the beſt of his Underſtanding, and the utmoſt of his Ability, carefully purſues his Maſter's Intereſt, and duely ſeeks his Credit and Reputation.——He keeps cloſe to his Inſtructions, and makes his Maſter's Will the Rule and Meaſure of his Conduct, in the Management of his Buſineſs.——He reſolutely ſhuns what his Maſter forbids, and in all Things lawful chearfully complies with what his Maſter requires.

Now theſe Hints may fitly be applied to the Temper and Carriage required in the *Servant*, that is to be accounted *faithful* to his *heavenly Maſter*. And they ſhew us,—that he is one, who is humbly, ſincerely, and entirely *devoted* to the *Worſhip* and *Fear* of GOD *(x)*:—— One, that ſerves Him *with a perfect Heart, and with a willing Mind (y)*:——One, that ſtudies to

(*x*) Pſal. cxix. 38. (*y*) 1 Chron. xxviii. 9.

to *know His holy Will* and Pleaſure; and to this End hears, reads, and meditates upon *His Word*, praying daily for an enlightened Mind, and a renewed Underſtanding.——He is one, that will not deſignedly, or knowingly, do any Iniquity; but has a conſtant *Reſpect unto all* GOD's *Commandments*, that he may *keep his Precepts diligently (z)*; aiming in all Things to *do that which is right* and *well-pleaſing in His Sight*, from Goſpel-Principles and to holy Ends; and making it his Care, that *whatſoever he does in Word or Deed, he do all in the Name of the Lord Jeſus*, to the Praiſe and Glory of GOD *by Him (a)*.

He then is *the faithful and wiſe Servant*, who makes a right Uſe of the *Goſpel-Revelation*, and who, according to the Inſtruction and Command thereof, *receives Chriſt Jeſus the Lord (b)*, holding Him to be his *Head of Righteouſneſs*, his *Head of Government*, and *Head of Influence*; and ſtedfaſtly adheres to Him in all his *mediatorial Characters*, as the Great *Prophet*, *Prieſt*, and *King* of the Church.

Agreeably hereunto, the *Character* of a *faithful Servant* may be more particularly viewed under Three Articles.——He renounces the *Guidance* of all *human Wiſdom* in Matters of Religion:——He relinquiſhes all Expectation and *Hope of Salvation* by his own *perſonal Obedience*: And,——He is conſtantly afraid of *holding the Truth in Unrighteouſneſs (c)*.

(1.) He

(z) Pſal. cxix. 4, 6.
(b) Col. ii. 6.
(a) Col. iii. 17.
(c) Rom. i. 18.

(1.) He renounces the *Guidance* of all *human Wiſdom* in the Matters of Religion.

He would have all the carnal Reaſonings and *vain Imaginations* of Men *caſt down*, with *every high Thing that exalteth itſelf againſt the Knowledge of GOD*; and would have *every Thought brought into Captivity to the Obedience of Chriſt* (*d*). Upon Him he waits for Light, Counſel, and Inſtruction, and for the gracious *Anointing* and Teaching of *His Spirit*, to *guide him into* the Knowledge and Practice of *all* heavenly and ſaving *Truth* (*e*); and would receive every Divine Truth upon the ſole Authority of his heavenly Maſter. As he will not *lean to his own Underſtanding* (*f*), ſo neither will he *call any Man upon Earth* Rabbi, or *Father* (*g*). He cannot allow himſelf to pay any Regard to the Authority of *Synods*, *Councils*, or *Fathers*, in any Point of Faith, Worſhip, or Obedience, when they *ſpeak not according to the* Divine *Law and Teſtimony* (*h*): But having given the *Word of Chriſt* a Place in his Heart, he *ſpeaks the Truth in Love* (*i*), and *earneſtly contends for the Faith, which was once delivered to the Saints* (*k*) by the Apoſtles and Prophets of old, and through the wonderful Goodneſs of the LORD is

(*d*) 2 Cor. x. 5.
(*e*) John xvi. 13.
(*f*) Prov. iii. 5.
(*g*) Mat. xxiii. 9.
(*h*) Iſai. viii. 20.
(*i*) Eph. iv. 15.
(*k*) Jude, *ver.* 3.

to this Day handed down to us in the *Scriptures.*

(2.) He relinquiſhes all Expectation and *Hope of Salvation* by his own *perſonal Obedience.*

He deſires, and endeavours, to *become dead to the Law* as a Covenant for Life, and would gladly *be married to another, even to Chriſt who was raiſed from the Dead (l)*: For he has learnt, that without a conjugal and vital *Union with Him*, no Man can *bring forth* any *Fruit unto GOD*, that would be acceptable; ſince *without Faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe Him (m).*

He is convinced of the Truth and Righteouſneſs of that *Divine Sentence*, which pronounceth, *Curſed is every one who continueth not in all Things which are written in the Book of the Law, to do them (n).* And being conſcious that he has been *a Tranſgreſſor*, he dares not now *truſt* to any *Works* or *Righteouſneſs of his own*, for his Juſtification or Acceptance at the Bar of GOD: No, not to his Faith or Love, to his Repentance or new Obedience; nor to any *inherent Righteouſneſs*, of which he himſelf can be the Subject, even after he has been renewed or born again. Yea, though *his Graces* be truly ſincere, and *his Works* really evangelical, ſpiritual, and holy, yet he dare no more *truſt to theſe*, than to any external

(*l*) Rom. vii. 4.
(*m*) Heb. xi. 6.
(*n*) Gal. iii. 10.

external *legal Righteouſneſs*, whether it be Ceremonial or Moral.

He knows, that how diligently or exactly ſoever the *Duties* of Religion may be performed, or how far ſoever a Man's *Works* of Juſtice and Virtue, of univerſal Benevolence and Charity, may be extended, they can *avail nothing* to the Juſtification of his Perſon before GOD: That *though he ſhould beſtow all his Goods to feed the Poor*, and *though* for the general Good of his Country, or ſome ſignal Service and Advantage to his Chriſtian Brethren, *he ſhould give his Body to be burned (o)*, yet without *Love to Chriſt*, and an entire *Truſt in Him*, as *the End of the Law for Righteouſneſs (p)*, all his *Doing* and *Suffering* would *profit him Nothing*. For he is fully aſſured, that after his utmoſt *Endeavours*, and the moſt powerful *Aſſiſtance* which in the preſent State can be expected *from above*, ſtill after all *his own perſonal Obedience* neither will nor can come up to the *abſolute Perfection* which the *Law* requires.

Nay farther, were it poſſible for him, from the Day of his Converſion or the Change of his State, to perform *an Obedience* that is *completely perfect*, and to *do all that is commanded*, notwithſtanding all this *he would be an unprofitable Servant*, who had *done that* only *which was his Duty to do (q)*: And his After-Obedience could never juſtify him from the Sins he had committed,

(o) 1 Cor. xiii. 3.
(p) Rom. x. 4.
(q) Luk. xvii. 10.

ted, or the Guilt he had contracted, before his Converſion.

Nor can any Man juſtly be accounted *a faithful Steward*, who has not made ſuch an Improvement of the ſupernatural *Revelation* which GOD has graciouſly ſent us, as to *renounce all Hopes* of Salvation by his *own Obedience*; acknowledging, that it is *in the Lord* JESUS CHRIST, the incarnate SON of GOD, and *in HIM alone*, that the Believer can find that abſolutely perfect and infinitely *meritorious Righteouſneſs*, in which *all Iſrael ſhall be juſtified, and ſhall glory* (*r*), while *he that believeth not, ſhall be damned* (*s*).

But I muſt farther remark concerning the *faithful Servant*, that as I ſaid before,

(3.) He is conſtantly afraid of *holding the Truth in Unrighteouſneſs.*

He dreads this above all Things: He dreads it *at his very Heart.* He eſteems no Condition of any Perſon upon Earth to be *worſe*, than that of the Man who is left to *commit this Abomination.* He ſees it to be ſuch a notorious Wickedneſs, that *the Wrath of GOD from Heaven* is particularly and moſt expreſsly *revealed againſt it* (*t*). And for this Reaſon, the *Servant* that is *faithful* does peremptorily *renounce the hidden Things of Diſhoneſty* (*u*); and ſolemnly revoking and ſincerely repenting of *his former Agree-*

(*r*) Iſai. xlv. 24, 25.
(*s*) Mark xvi. 16.
(*t*) Rom. i. 18.
(*u*) 2 Cor. iv. 2.

Agreement with Sin and Hell, he now *cleaves to the Lord* his GOD *with full Purpoſe of Heart (w)*, and will not allow *any other Lords to have Dominion over him (x)*. He cannot conſent, that *Sin* ſhould *reign in his mortal Body, that he ſhould obey it in the Luſts thereof*: But *being made free from Sin, and become a Servant to GOD*, he endeavours to *have his Fruit unto Holineſs (y)*, that GOD may be glorified. And with this View, he *ſeeks not his own Things*, but *the Things which are Jeſus Chriſt's (z)*.

He openly, and from his Heart, avows CHRIST to be *the ſole King* of the Church, and would gladly be ſubdued to Him entirely; reſolving in His Strength *to obſerve all Things whatſoever He has commanded (a)*, and being deſirous *to honour Him even as he honours the Father (b)*. Accordingly he conſcientiouſly endeavours to keep *pure and entire* all ſuch *religious Worſhip* and *Ordinances*, as He hath appointed in His Goſpel. He practically renounces all the *Blaſphemies* which are committed by the avowed Enemies of CHRIST, both *Jews* and *Mahometans*, and all the *Idolatries* practiſed even in *Popiſh* as well as *Pagan* Countries, with all the *Abominations*, Superſtition, and Corruptions, countenanced by *the Whore of Babylon*.——Nor dare he ſubmit to any *National Eſtabliſhment*, which he does not find authorized or warranted by the Word of GOD: And in his Judgment it is an inconteſtable

(*w*) Acts xi. 23.
(*x*) Iſai. xxvi. 13.
(*y*) Rom. vi. 12, 22.
(*z*) Phil. ii. 21.
(*a*) Mat. xxviii. 20.
(*b*) John v. 23.

inconteſtable Principle, that *it cannot be right in the Sight of* GOD, *to hearken unto Men, more than unto* GOD *(c)*.

Now by a ſerious Reflection upon what has been delivered under the Three preceeding Remarks, does it not ſufficiently appear, that a Man cannot juſtly be reckoned *a Faithful and Wiſe Servant*, unleſs he be *a faithful Diſciple* of JESUS CHRIST?

Having thus opened the *Character* of a *faithful Servant*, I ſhall now,

2. Shew, that it is *by the Grace of* GOD alone, that any Man can be *able* to anſwer *this Character*.

If he that is a *faithful Servant* muſt anſwer the *Character* which has now been given, as the *Scriptures* plainly evince, the *Queſtion* then is, "Where ſhall a *faithful Servant* be found?"

Had your excellent *Doctor* been the Perſon to have given the *Anſwer* to this Queſtion, I am ready to think, that in his familiar, but ſtriking and pungent Way of Speaking, he would at once, as juſtly he might, have told you plainly, "That by Reaſon of *the Fall* we are become "ſuch a Company of vile wicked Wretches, "that there is *not a good Servant* to be found." No, among all the Sons and Daughters of *Adam* in their apoſtate Condition, there is *not one* to be found, that is fit for the Service of GOD, or who will be *faithful* to our heavenly Maſter; *not one*,

(c) Acts iv. 19.

one, who *naturally cares* for His Worſhip, or that *chuſes* to fear and ſerve the LORD. For *there is none that underſtandeth, there is none that ſeeketh after GOD: They are all gone out of the Way, they are together become unprofitable, there is none that doth Good, no not one (d).*

This is the Account, which by the Direction of GOD *Paul* quotes in his *Epiſtle* to the *Romans*, from a *Pſalm* that was wrote by the immediate Inſpiration of the Spirit of GOD. And under the ſame infallible Teaching the *Apoſtle* proceeds ſtill farther, and aſſures us in the ſame *Epiſtle*, that Men are naturally ſo far from being inclined or diſpoſed to *ſerve the Lord in Sincerity and Truth*, in Righteouſneſs and Uprightneſs, as *David* did, that their *carnal Mind is Enmity againſt GOD (e).*

And from this *Enmity againſt GOD* ſo ſtrongly aſſerted, we may juſtly and very pertinently to our preſent Purpoſe infer, that a Man cannot be his *faithful Servant*, unleſs he be made *a Partaker of a new, divine, and holy Nature.* Now there cannot be *a new Nature*, without *a new Creation*; and there is no *new Creation*, but *by the Grace of GOD* in CHRIST JESUS.

Thus then it appears from this *Scriptural* Way of Reaſoning, that it is *by the Grace of GOD* any are made *faithful.*——And as a farther Confirmation of this important Truth, I cannot forbear turning you to that remarkable Paſſage in *Rev.* xvii. 14. where we have a Deſcription of *thoſe that are with the Lamb*; who are

(d) Rom. iii. 11, 12. (e) Rom. viii. 7.

are diſtinguiſhed by *Three Appellations* peculiar to themſelves, being declared to be Perſons, who are *called, and choſen, and faithful.* Upon which Words I humbly conceive it is juſt and proper to obſerve diſtinctly,

That none will openly and boldly, or ſtedfaſtly and heartily, ſtand on the Side of *the Lamb*, pleading for the Purity of the Faith, Worſhip, and Obedience of the Goſpel, againſt the Superſtition, Corruption, and Errors of the Wicked, but His true Diſciples and *faithful* Followers.

Again, we may obſerve, that none can act this faithful Part, but they who have been *effectually called* by the ſpecial, ſupernatural, and efficacious Grace of the infinitely bleſſed and holy Spirit.

And farther, that none are at any Time thus called, but they who from Eternity have been *choſen in Chriſt*, and were the Objects of *the Father's* rich, free, diſcriminating and unchangeable Love in Him.

From this inſtructive Deſcription of *thoſe with the Lamb*, we may learn, that whoever are found *faithful* to their heavenly LORD, their *Faithfulneſs* ſprings originally from the *electing Love* of the *Father*, and is the proper and immediate Effect of the *Spirit's Work* upon the Heart.——When we conſider therefore the original Spring and Fountain, with the proper immediate and efficient Cauſe, of the *Faithfulneſs* of Believers, we muſt acknowledge, that it is *by the Grace of GOD* that any Man becomes

ſuch

ſuch a *faithful and wiſe Servant* as the *Text* refers to.

To conclude this Head, I ſhall only add, that as it muſt be allowed, that none can be *faithful* but thoſe who are *holy*, ſo none can be *holy* who *fail of the Grace of GOD.*

I now paſs on to the next general Head, under which I am to ſhew,

III. That *preſent Faithfulneſs* is a ſure Preſage of *future Bleſſedneſs.*

The *Parable* teaches us, that every *faithful and wiſe Steward* ſhall be *made Ruler over his Lord's Houſhold.* This denotes the great *Dignity* and *Honour*, which in the future State *Chriſt* will confer upon *all his faithful Servants*, both Miniſters and People. And the *Text* itſelf pronounces *that Servant bleſſed*, who is found *faithful* at *his Lord's Coming.*

We may juſtly conclude therefore, that *Grace* never makes any *faithful*, but with a Deſign to crown them with *Glory.* Such as GOD *foreknew*, and *loved with an everlaſting Love*, He did *predeſtinate to be conformed to the Image of his Son (f).* And there are Two Things in particular, wherein *all the Saints* ſhall in their Meaſure bear a *Conformity* to the *Son of GOD:* Theſe are *His Faithfulneſs*, and *His Glory.*

Upon the Account of *Chriſt's Faithfulneſs*, He is termed GOD's *righteous Servant (g).* And ſuch is the Redeemer's Care over all whom He

(f) Rom. viii. 29. (g) Iſai. liii. 11.

has ranſomed, that notwithſtanding their *natural Enmity* againſt GOD, their manifold Difficulties, and innumerable Defects and Imperfections, He does ſo effectually and thoroughly renew them, as to *render them faithful*, whatever be the Service in which He employs them: As He did *Paul*, when He *put him into the Miniſtry* (*h*).

And they that are now *conformed* to the Image of *Chriſt* in *Faithfulneſs*, ſo far as their Capacities will admit of it, are certainly aſſured, they ſhall hereafter be *conformed* to it likewiſe *in Glory*. For as He *overcame, and is ſet down with His Father in His Throne*, ſo to all who through Grace are enabled to *overcome* the Temptations, that are any way offered to make them unfaithful, *will Chriſt grant to ſit with Him in His Throne* (*i*); where they ſhall be crowned with all the *Glory* and Honour, and receive all the Felicity and *Bleſſedneſs*, that can reſult from their having *Chriſt Himſelf* to be *their GOD*, or from their being treated by Him, *not as Servants*, but as *His Sons*: And He being *GOD over all Bleſſed for ever* (*k*), He will aſſuredly make all his Sons to *inherit all Things* (*l*), even all that can be deſired to conſummate their Happineſs, and make it every Way abſolutely compleat and full. *Our Lord* then having expreſsly *promiſed this*, the Certainty and Infallibility of *His Promiſe* does inviolably eſtabliſh an inſeparable Connection between *preſent Faithfulneſs* and *future Bleſſedneſs*.

I ſhall

(*h*) 1 Tim. i. 12.
(*i*) Rev. iii. 21.
(*k*) Rom. ix. 5.
(*l*) Rev. xxi. 7.

I ſhall now conſider the laſt general Head propoſed, *viz.*

IV. That it is a ſpecial Privilege, when any *Servant of the Lord* is favoured with *a Capacity* of attending upon *publick Worſhip*, and engaging in the *Work* and *Service of the Lord*, until the *Day of his Death.*

Here we may take Notice, that *Feeding the Houſhold* is a Work of a *publick* Nature, and *giving them their Portion of Meat in due Seaſon* is an Inſtance of *Faithfulneſs.* The Reddition therefore in the Text [*ſo doing*] may juſtly be taken as ſignifying, that there is a *Bleſſedneſs* in the *Servant's* being found in like Manner *faithfully* and actively *engaged* in ſome *publick Service* at the Time of *his Lord's Coming.*——And ſince one remarkable Inſtance of *Chriſt's Coming* to his People in all Ages before the End of the World, will be *at their Death*, we may warrantably take the Senſe of the Words to be, *Bleſſed is that faithful Servant*, who ſhall be found actively and ſeaſonably *engaged* in the ſtated *publick Worſhip* of GOD until the *Day of his Death.*

This Conſtruction of the *Text* is very agreeable to ſome other Paſſages of *Scripture:* Particularly to *David's* Requeſt, that he *might dwell in the Houſe of the Lord all the Days of his Life (m)*; which implied a Deſire, that he might *to the laſt* be favoured with an Opportunity and a Capacity for *publick Worſhip.*——And

(*m*) Pſal. xxvii. 4.

his holy Thirſt after Communion with GOD, and his fervent Zeal for the Divine Honour, made him *regret the Loſs* of ſuch Opportunities; as appears from his lamenting it, that while *the People were gathered together to ſerve the Lord, his Strength was weakened in the Way (n).*

We may conclude then, that there is a *Bleſſedneſs* in a *Servant's* being favoured with *a Capacity* for attending upon *publick Worſhip*; and a *Bleſſedneſs* in being found *faithfully* and actually *engaged in it* until the *Day of his Deceaſe.*

But yet we are by no Means to imagine, that this *Bleſſedneſs* is abſolutely *neceſſary* to the Servant's *future Happineſs.* Such a Suppoſition would be a ſore *Diſcouragement* to many of *Chriſt's faithful Miniſters*, and many of GOD's *dear Children*, who may be *laid aſide* from the *publick Service* and *Worſhip* of GOD, not for a few Sabbaths only, but perhaps for ſeveral Months or Years, *before their Death.*——In ſuch a Caſe, it is our Duty to be chearfully *reſigned* to the Diſpoſal of our heavenly LORD, who will have ſome to be *His waiting Servants*, while others are *His working Servants.* And if we are ſo happy as to be *made accepted in the Beloved (o)*, and received into *the Family of GOD*, there can be no Reaſon for any Complaint or Murmuring, though according to his holy and ſovereign Pleaſure He ſhould ſtation us among *His waiting Servants*, for what Time his infinite Wiſdom ſhall judge moſt proper *for our Good* to his own Glory. For we may be equally *faithful*

(n) Pſal. cii. 24, 25. (o) Eph. i. 6.

faithful and accepted *in ſuffering*, as *in doing* His Will.——And whatſoever be the Tribulation, which for any Space may unavoidably lay us under *a neceſſary Reſtraint* from *publick Worſhip*, GOD can abundantly make up *the Loſs of this Privilege* ſome other Way. And it is enough for our Encouragement, when in a lively Exerciſe of Faith we remember *our Lord's Promiſe*, that He will freely and certainly *give a Crown of Life* to thoſe, who carefully improve the Opportunities of publick Worſhip He affords them, and are *faithful unto Death (p)*.

Having premiſed theſe Hints, I may now very juſtly and ſafely declare it to be *a bleſſed Privilege*, for a Believer to have the *Ability* of attending the *Worſhip of GOD* in the *publick Congregation* continued until the *Day of his Death*.

This Favour, it is plain, has been granted to *ſeveral* of the *Servants of GOD*. I may in particular mention *Aaron, the Saint of the Lord*, who no doubt was *in a Capacity* of performing the *Functions of his Office* in the Houſe of GOD, upon *the Day* in which it was ordered, he ſhould *go up into the Mount*, and be *ſtripped of his Garments, and die there (q)*. —— And of *Moſes* alſo we read, that when he had made an End of *pronouncing the Bleſſing upon all Iſrael* in the publick Audience of the People, *on that ſelf-ſame Day the Lord ſpake unto him, ſaying, Get thee up unto Mount Nebo*, and there *die, and be gathered unto thy People (r)*.

And

(p) Rev. ii. 10. (q) Numb. xx. 26, 28.
(r) Deut. xxxii. 48, ——50.

And even in our own Times ſome of the noted *Diſciples of Chriſt* have been thus *ſuddenly removed*, at the *Command*, and as it were by the immediate *Hand of GOD*, without ſo much as *one Day's Confinement* from *publick Worſhip* immediately before their Death.——A very freſh and remarkable Inſtance of this you have had, in the *ſudden Removal* of your honoured *Paſtor*, who had the *Privilege* of attending *publick Worſhip* on the very *Day of his Death*.

Now the *Bleſſedneſs* of this *Privilege* may be conſidered diſtinctly in Two Branches.

1. There is a *Pleaſure* in a Believer's being continued in *a Capacity* of joining in the *publick Worſhip* of GOD till the *laſt Part of his Life*.
2. There is an *Advantage* to be expected in his *being removed* immediately after he has been *faithfully engaged* therein.

Theſe Conſiderations will ſufficiently diſplay the *Bleſſedneſs* of this *Privilege*.

1. There is a *Pleaſure* in a Believer's being continued in *a Capacity* of joining in the *publick Worſhip* of GOD till the very *laſt Part of his Life*.

This *Privilege* is indeed a moſt valuable *Bleſſing*, not merely with Regard to ſome *temporal Conſiderations*, relating to the bodily *Health* and *Eaſe* which may be ſuppoſed to attend it, but

but upon many *ſpiritual Accounts* of the greateſt Importance. And the *Chriſtian*'s high Regard to *publick Worſhip* ever makes him to eſteem it as a *Pleaſure* to attend upon it. For he knows, that tho' GOD's *gracious Preſence* is not confined to the Ordinances of his Houſe, yet *the Lord loveth the Gates of Zion, more than all the Dwellings of Jacob (s)*. Every Goſpel-Church is a *Zion, the City of God*; and *the Name* which he has appointed to be given it, is JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH, *the LORD is there (t)*. And thro' the Divine Preſence of the LORD THE SPIRIT in His mighty Power and Grace, many Souls have been there *regenerated* to a ſpiritual and divine Life, have been there fed with *the ſincere Milk of the Word (u)*, yea, have there learnt *the Certainty of the Words of Truth*, and been taught moſt *excellent Things* (*w*). And from the *Benefit* which they have received, they are encouraged to hope from Time to Time, that they ſhall there ſee more of *the Beauty of the Lord* (*x*), and of *the unſearchable Riches of Chriſt* (*y*); and ſhall there meet with ſuch ſweet and powerful *Communications of His Grace*, as ſhall increaſe their *Faith*, quicken their evangelical *Repentance*, confirm their *Hope*, and inflame their *Love* to GOD, and all the Duties of practical Religion and true Holineſs. And there they expect to receive thoſe *Inſtructions*, and thoſe *Impreſſions*, which ſhall be uſeful and effectual to wean them from the *preſent evil World*, to fit them for *Death and*

(*s*) Pſal. lxxxvii. 2. (*t*) Ezek. xlviii. 35. (*u*) 1 Pet. ii. 2. (*w*) Prov. xxii. 20, 21. (*x*) Pſal. xxvii. 4. (*y*) Eph. iii. 8.

and Judgment, and to prepare them for the *heavenly Glory*.

Now as *Citizens* and *Merchants* think it a *Privilege*, to be continued in thoſe Circumſtances of *Health* which will admit of their frequenting *the Exchange*, and other *publick Places*, where their *worldly Buſineſs* is to be tranſacted; thus the *Believer* cannot but eſteem it *a ſingular Favour*, to be ſpared in a State of ſuch *Activity* and *Vigour*, that to the laſt Period of Life he may be able *with Pleaſure* ſtatedly to attend thoſe *publick religious Aſſemblies*, in which he hopes to enjoy the moſt profitable and delightful *Intercourſe with Heaven*.

Beſides, he eſteems it a bleſſed *Privilege*, to have the Opportunity of *teſtifying* by an Attendance upon the *publick Worſhip* which the Goſpel requires, *his humble Gratitude* for the *great Salvation* which the Goſpel reveals. He *delights* by ſuch Attendances to *exalt his Redeemer's Name*, and to pay an open, a dutiful, and manifeſt *Regard* to his LORD's *Authority*, in obſerving the Ordinances of His Appointment; and in the *publick Uſe* thereof, according to His Command, to join in perpetuating the Memory of his *Saviour's Incarnation*, of His *Obedience unto Death*, and of His *Reſurrection*; that all around him may know, to whom *he* is, and to whom alone *they* ſhould be *looking* for Salvation, even to *Jeſus the Author and Finiſher of our Faith* (*z*), who has *magnified the Law, and made it honourable* (*a*). Thus the Believer finds a *Pleaſure* in his attending

(*z*) Heb. xii. 2. (*a*) Iſai. xlii. 21.

ing upon *publick Ordinances*: So that in this reſpect, *Bleſſed is that Servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, ſhall find ſo doing.*

And in particular, The *faithful Miniſter*, who delights in his Maſter's Work, cannot but eſteem it *a ſignal Bleſſing* to be indulged to the very *End of Life* with an Ability of *appearing publickly*, according to his Commiſſion, *in the chief Place of Concourſe, in the opening of the Gates*, and *in the City* (*b*), to *utter* the Word of the LORD; that thro' the Divine Bleſſing he may be the *happy Inſtrument* of converting Sinners, and of eſtabliſhing and comforting the Saints. And remarkably *bleſſed is that* faithful *Servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, ſhall find ſo doing.* But again,

2. There is alſo ſome *Advantage* the Believer may expect, in his *being removed* immediately after he has been *faithfully engaging* in *publick Worſhip.*

The moſt happy *Advantages* for Eternity, reſult from *Communion with GOD:* And there is no where any greater Nearneſs of *Acceſs unto Him* to be expected upon Earth, than in the *Ordinances* of His Houſe, and a faithful *Attendance* upon His *publick Worſhip.* For when this is performed in a ſpiritual manner, according to the Goſpel-Rule, the Believer there makes an humble Acknowledgment of *the Apoſtacy of our Nature*, with the conſequent Guilt and Pollution which do univerſally attend it. There he

E makes

(*b*) Prov. i. 21.

makes a penitential Confeſſion of *the Plague of his own Heart* (*c*), and of the innumerable aggravated Tranſgreſſions and ſad Omiſſions of his Life. There he hears the wonderful Settlements of *the everlaſting Covenant* opened and unfolded, and thereupon repeats his Application by Faith to *the Blood of Chriſt*; and with an humble and holy Confidence he there afreſh lays hold of *the exceeding great and precious Promiſes* (*d*) which his GOD *has given him*, and on which He *hath cauſed him to hope*. There he renews his ſolemn *Self-dedication* to GOD, and his ſincere *Renunciation* of all Friendſhip with the Enemies of his LORD. There he gets a freſh Taſte of the *Divine Love*, and a freſh Sight of the *heavenly Glory*, with a ſweet Confirmation of his *Hope*, that through the *Righteouſneſs* and *Grace* of his *Redeemer* he ſhall quickly be made a Partaker of it: And *this Hope*, in Proportion to its high Degree, begets in him a vehement *Deſire to depart* (*e*), that he may *be with Chriſt* in the Manſions above. —Now theſe are remarkable *Advantages*, which happily prepare and diſpoſe the Soul to *meet Death with a Smile*.

But beſides theſe, there are *further Advantages*, which in a peculiar Manner ariſe from a faithful *Attendance* upon *publick Worſhip*, and which cannot immediately flow from the neareſt *Communion* with GOD *in ſecret*.——It is true *in ſecret Worſhip* every Believer, under the gracious and powerful Impreſſions of the *Holy Ghoſt*, does by the outward Expreſſions of his Mouth, as

(*c*) 1 Kings viii. 38. (*d*) 2 Pet. i. 4. (*e*) Phil. i. 23.

as well as in the inward Language of his Heart, *declare* unto JEHOVAH, *Father, Son, and Spirit*, the *Holy One of Iſrael*, that upon the moſt mature Deliberation, renouncing all Idols, he cordially and fixedly chuſes Him to be *his Covenant-GOD and Father*, the only Object of his religious Worſhip and Adoration, and the Portion of his Soul for ever.——The Believer, I ſay, humbly and ſincerely declares this *in ſecret* to the LORD Himſelf: But by his *publick Worſhip* performed according to the Rule of the Word, he *openly declares this* before all who are the Witneſſes of his religious Attendances. Thus he bears a noble Teſtimony to the Reality, Excellence, and Glory of the *Goſpel-Salvation*, and to the Suitableneſs and Divine Authority of a *Goſpel-Worſhip*, and a *Goſpel-Walk*. By every freſh Act of *Worſhip* in the Houſe of GOD, he gives a freſh Evidence, that he accounts *the Ways of Wiſdom* to be *Ways of Pleaſantneſs*, and that *all her Paths are Peace* (*f*). And if his Life be free from thoſe *Irregularities*, which would *contradict* his Profeſſion or *ſlur* his Chriſtian Character, he then by the Obedience of *his Worſhip* practically *condemns the World*, as *Noah* did (*g*), for all their Profaneneſs and Irreligion, their wretched Stupidity and carnal Security, for the Worldlineſs of their Temper, the Impenitence, Unbelief, and Hardneſs of their Hearts.

And is not *a Conſciouſneſs* of his having been excited, notwithſtanding all Oppoſition from the Devil, the World, and the Fleſh, to a *perſever-*

(*f*) Prov. iii. 17. (*g*) Heb. xi. 7.

ing Conſtancy in ſuch a religious Conduct as this, an encouraging *Evidence* to his own Soul, that his GOD *knows him by Name*, and that he has *found Grace in his Sight (h)?* Eſpecially, when with the Teſtimony of *his own Conſcience* he has the ſecret Atteſtation of *the Spirit of Adoption*, that the *Worſhip* which he performs in the Houſe of GOD, neither ſprings from any ſelfiſh or worldly Motive, nor is directed by *fleſhly Wiſdom* to any baſe ſiniſter End, but that all is done *by the Grace of GOD* in a holy *Simplicity and godly Sincerity (i)*, with a Deſign, that by keeping up the *Worſhip of the Sanctuary* he might not only honour GOD *himſelf*, but invite, encourage, and aſſiſt *others*, to *avouch the Lord to be their GOD (k)*, to love and fear Him, to obey His Voice, and cleave to Him, as the only felicitating Object of their Souls, in the full Enjoyment of whom alone they can have eternal Life.

And when *a faithful Servant* has thus the Comfort of *knowing*, that after the Example of *Caleb* and *Joſhua*, *he has followed the Lord fully (l)*, Is he not then in a fit Condition to meet *the King of Terrors*, whatever ſhall be the *Seaſon* or *Manner* of his Approach?

Or if the *Chriſtian*, juſt after he has been *in the Mount with GOD*, even before he comes down *into the Vale of Temptation* again, ſhould *at once be diſcharged* from a State of *Warfare*, and ordered to take his final Farewel of *the Church-Militant*, that while he is in ſuch a heavenly

(*h*) Exod. xxxiii. 12, 17. (*i*) 2 Cor. i. 12. (*k*) Deut. xxvi. 17. (*l*) Numb. xiv. 24.

venly and comfortable Frame he may *immediately* go and join *the Church-Triumphant*, with what powerful Succours and wonderful *Advantages* does he then *meet Death*? If ſuch a happy and *ſudden Change* may not ſtrictly be termed *a Tranſlation*, yet it muſt be very near a-kin. For though the dying Believer *drops his Body*, as *Eliſah* did *his Mantle (m)*, ſtill in a happy Senſe it may truly be ſaid of him, as it was of *Enoch*, that *He walked with GOD, and was not, for GOD took him (n)*.

But that none of the Saints may be *diſcouraged*, though it ſhould be their Lot to have *a lingring Death*, let it be remembered, that the Summit of *the Servant's Bleſſedneſs* ariſes not from the *Manner* of his Diſmiſſion from his Work, but from his receiving that tranſporting *Eulogium*, when CHRIST Himſelf ſhall ſay to him, *Well done, thou good and faithful Servant, enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord (o)*. How painful or waſting therefore, or of how long a Continuance ſoever, were the Diſeaſes of his Body, which prepared the Way, and by ſlow Degrees brought on his Diſſolution, *Bleſſed* notwithſtanding *ſhall that Servant be, at his Lord's Coming*.

Having thus conſidered the Heads at firſt propoſed, I ſhall now draw to a Concluſion of this Diſcourſe, by ſhewing what ſpecial *Improvement* we ſhould make of them, in a Way of Perſonal *APPLICATION*.

The

(m) 2 Kings ii. 13. (n) Gen. v. 24. (o) Mat. xxv. 21.

The important Truths I have delivered point out various *Duties* and *Exerciſes of Grace*, ſome whereof I ſhall briefly urge in the following Order.

1. We are called to a ſerious *Enquiry* into our own Caſe, and a cloſe *Self-Examination.*

It is our Duty to enquire, *what Talents* we have received, *how* they have been *employed*, and whether we are prepared to *give an Account of our Stewardſhip* with Comfort.

Let me ſolemnly addreſs myſelf to *You of this Congregation.* You have been *highly favoured* with a rich Enjoyment of the Means of Grace. It is *near Fifty Years* ſince ſome of this Church *firſt enjoyed* the miniſterial Labours of the Deceaſed at *Zoar Street:* And none that ſate under his Miniſtry, whether *there*, or in the *preſent Place* of your ſolemn Meetings, but muſt acknowledge, you have been intruſted with *many precious Talents.*

Think, Sirs, while *your Paſtor* has been ſtatedly and diligently officiating among you one Sabbath after another for Years paſt, Was not every Ordinance *a Talent?* every Sermon *a Talent?* yea, and every Sentence which *dropt from the Lips* of one *whoſe Mouth the Lord had touched*, a valuable *Talent* committed to thoſe that heard him?

How

How vaſt then is the Sum of *your Talents?* and how awful muſt be *the Account* which you are to give? You cannot but know, that *a Day of Reckoning* is coming, and you muſt ſhortly be *called to an Account* by the Supreme *Judge* who *ſearcheth the Heart*, for all the *Convictions* about ſpiritual and eternal Things, that have at any Time been raiſed in your Minds under *his faithful Miniſtry*.——You muſt *give an Account*, what Uſe you have made of all the ſolemn *Warnings*, and awakening *Expoſtulations*, which he has opened to you *out of the Scriptures*; of all the kind, authoritative, and melting *Invitations*, which in the Name of the LORD he has given you; and of all the attracting *Declarations* of Salvation by CHRIST for humble Penitents and true Believers, which he has publiſhed agreeable to his Commiſſion.——And further, you muſt alſo *give an Account*, what Return you have made, with Regard to the many *preſſing Calls* to a humble *holy Walking* before GOD, with which *his judicious Miniſtry* did abound, while he was *teſtifying the Goſpel of the Grace of GOD* among you.

Let me beſeech you therefore to conſider, that every one of *this Congregation* in particular, who refuſes to *believe in Chriſt, and follow Him*, will at laſt be *condemned* in the moſt dreadful Manner, as an *unjuſt Steward*, as a moſt *ſlothful and wicked Servant*.——Again,

2. We are directed *what Method* we ſhould take, that we may be *made faithful*.

Special

Special and efficacious *Grace*, we have heard, is abſolutely *neceſſary* to *make us faithful*. And none can warrantably expect to be *Partakers of this Grace*, who do not humbly *aſk* and *ſeek it* at the Door of Mercy. This plainly teaches us *our Duty*, and directs us *to ſeek the Lord, while he may be found*, and *to call upon Him, while he is near* (*p*). He has declared, that He will *give the Holy Spirit unto them that aſk him* (*q*): And it is certain, that *if any Man have not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of His* (*r*), none of His *faithful Servants*. Wait therefore *for the Promiſe of the Father*, and make it your Requeſt, that He would *quicken you by His Spirit*. ——Be fully aſſured, my Friends, that the Perſon who *has not the Spirit*, is *ſenſual* (*s*), and *cannot be faithful*: And the Man that is *prayerleſs* at his LORD's Coming, *cannot be found doing* as his LORD required. None of you can pretend, that in this Point *you know not the Will* of your LORD: If therefore you *neglect* what He has given you in Charge, and *will not prepare to meet Him*, you muſt ſuffer the ſoreſt Puniſhment, for you *ſhall be beaten with many Stripes* (*t*). Let us then *daily pray*, that our GOD would *pour upon us the Spirit of Grace and Supplication* (*u*), or we cannot be *faithful*.——But further,

3. We are ſtrongly obliged to make all poſſible Returns of *Gratitude* and *Praiſe* for *redeeming Love*. Were

(*p*) Iſai. lv. 6. (*q*) Luk. xi. 13. (*r*) Rom. viii. 9.
(*s*) Jude, *ver.* 19. (*t*) Luk. xii. 47. (*u*) Zech. xii. 10.

Were all the valuable *Talents* given to our Nature at its Creation, *embezzeled* and loſt through the *Unfaithfulneſs* of our *common Parent* and publick Repreſentative, *the Firſt Adam*, How *thankful* then ſhould we be for JESUS CHRIST, *the Second Adam*, who is *the Lord from Heaven (w)*? He is the infinitely glorious *Redeemer*, who through his amazing Condeſcenſion, in Love to his People, *reſtored that which he took not away (x)*. He has wrought out, and *brought in* an *everlaſting Righteouſneſs (y)*, which *juſtifies every Believer* from all his Iniquities and Unfaithfulneſs;——both from the *original Unfaithfulneſs*, which according to the righteous Conſtitution of the *firſt Covenant* is juſtly *imputed* to our Nature, and is equally *charged* upon every one of the human Race, while he remains in a State of Impenitence and Unbelief;——and likewiſe from all thoſe particular Inſtances of *actual Unfaithfulneſs*, of which the Believer is convinced he has been guilty in his own individual Perſon, and which he knows are *more than can be numbered.*

Now muſt we not all agree, that we can never be *thankful* enough for this *glorious Redeemer*, and His *perfect Righteouſneſs:* Eſpecially, when we conſider, that though every *unjuſt Steward* will be *condemned* for his *Unfaithfulneſs* and Sin; yet among all the Sons of *fallen Adam* there is not any one *faithful Servant*, that can

(w) 1 Cor. xv. 47. (x) Pſal. lxix. 4. (y) Dan. ix. 24.

be *juſtified* at the Bar of GOD *by his own Works:* No, whatever be the *Exactneſs* and *Faithfulneſs* with which he performs them. So that every real *Chriſtian* is undoubtedly of the like Sentiments with *Job*, and will be ever ready to adopt his Language, ſaying, *If I be wicked, Wo unto me; and if I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my Head (z).*

All true Believers then hold themſelves eternally bound to offer the higheſt *Praiſes* to the SACRED THREE: To the FATHER, who ſent His Son to be *the Propitiation for our Sins:* To the SON, who by His *Obedience unto Death* has made a real and compleat *Atonement:* And to the infinitely bleſſed SPIRIT, who enables us by Faith to *receive the Atonement (a)*; and to rely upon it, and plead it, as *the only Foundation* of our Hope of Acceptance with GOD.

And this leads me to add, that by the Doctrines we have now heard,

4. We are excited to an humble *Admiration* of the *rich Grace* which GOD beſtows on His *faithful Servants.*

It has been already ſhewn from the Scriptures, that *the Grace of GOD* is the proper, efficient, and immediate *Cauſe* of all the *Faithfulneſs* found in any of His Servants. And it is very natural and juſt from hence to infer, that Believers are bound to *admire* and *adore* that *Grace*, which makes *themſelves* or *others* faithful.

Here

(z) Job x. 15. (a) Rom. v. 11.

Here I am perſuaded, the Hint is no ſooner given with Regard to our *admiring the Grace* which makes *others faithful*, but You of *this Congregation* will be preſently ſaying within yourſelves, There was in Truth great Reaſon to *admire the Grace* beſtowed upon *your Paſtor*; whom GOD raiſed up, fitted for his Work, *put into the Miniſtry*, and made *for you*, as *Epaphras* was for the *Coloſſians (b)*, *a faithful Miniſter of Chriſt*.

It is not for me, I confeſs, to launch out in *Praiſe of the Deceaſed*. Such a Practice in *funeral Diſcourſes*, I have been aſſured from ſome of his own Family, was *his Averſion*. And yet I cannot think, that any *Reſtriction* I am under ſhould *wholly prevent* my taking Notice of ſome remarkable and uncommon *Inſtances of Faithfulneſs*, both in his *private Life*, and *publick Miniſtry*: Eſpecially, ſince the *juſt Relation* of theſe Things may greatly redound *to the Praiſe of the Glory of the Grace* of GOD. Nor will it I preſume be thought culpable in me, to relate in this publick Manner *ſome Paſſages*, which upon certain Occaſions for very weighty Reaſons he has modeſtly dropped *concerning himſelf*, in a free Converſation with *intimate Friends*, or in the Preſence of *young Students*, for their Direction, Quickening, or Encouragement.

And ſince I ſpeak upon good Grounds, I apprehend I may now juſtly take the Liberty to ſay, that after he was ſomewhat advanced in

(*b*) Col. i. 7.

Youth, he ſaw himſelf obliged to make a right Uſe of *the Talents* which GOD had given him: And being endued with a *very ſtrong Memory*, he thought it his Duty to make it *a ſecret Repoſitory* of the Words of Divine Revelation.

Accordingly he treaſured up *a larger Portion of the Scriptures*, than perhaps any one beſides, whom we have known, ever did. For there are ſome who can aſſure us, they had the Account immediately from himſelf, that he had *committed to Memory* not a few *whole Books*, both of the *Old Teſtament*, and the *New* *. When he mentioned this, he named diſtinctly *Job*, *Pſalms*, *Proverbs*, *Eccleſiaſtes*, *Iſaiah*, and *Jeremiah*, with all the *minor Prophets*; and every one of *the Epiſtles* likewiſe in the *New Teſtament*, with the Book of *the Revelation*. And that he might carefully retain the whole of what he had thus learnt, he declared, it was his Practice to repeat them *memoriter* once a Year.—— The ſpecial *Reaſon* or Motive, which he aſſigned for his entering upon this Method, deſerves a particular Notice. He began it in the *younger Part of Life*, when being under a deep Senſe of the *Evil of Sin*, and his Mind ſadly ignorant of GOD's *Way of Salvation* by the *Righteouſneſs* of the glorious *Meſſiah*, or being in the Dark as to his own perſonal *Intereſt in it*, he was ſorely diſtreſſed with Fears, that *Hell* muſt be *his Portion*.

* The Account inſerted in *this Paragraph* was not mentioned when the Sermon was preached, as I had not then received the particular and certain Information, or at leaſt not the full and ſatisfactory Evidence of the Truth of it, which ſince I have.

on. At that Time it was put into his Heart, that if he *muſt go to Hell,* he would endeavour to *carry with him* as much of *the Word of GOD* as poſſibly he could.——And it ſeems to me to have been *a ſecret latent Principle* of the *Fear* and *Love* of GOD, that eſtabliſhed him in this Purpoſe. For it looks as if he deſired to have a Supply of *Scripture Materials* for his Mind to work upon, chuſing it ſhould ever be employed in recollecting and reflecting upon *thoſe Records,* that thereby if poſſible it might be kept from *blaſpheming GOD,* like the reſt of the Spirits in the infernal Priſon.——But *the Grace* which thus engaged him to ſtore up *the holy Scriptures,* at length bleſſed them to be the means of making him *wiſe to Salvation, through Faith which is in Chriſt Jeſus.*

Beſides a ſtrong Memory, the *Doctor* was favoured with very pregnant *Natural Parts,* and good *Intellectual Abilities.* He was indulged likewiſe, though not with a very robuſt, yet with a pretty firm and healthful *Conſtitution of Body.* Theſe Privileges diſpoſed and enabled him to be diligent in his *Application to Learning,* in a Manner and to a Degree very uncommon. For upon different Occaſions I have heard him more than once or twice ſay, "That in the vi-"gorous Part of Life it was *his Cuſtom* for ſome "Space, *to ſit up* frequently *whole Nights,* ge-"nerally two, and ſometimes three in a Week "the Year round." Part of the Night he ſpent in *religious Exerciſes,* and the reſt of it (as Duty and Occaſion required,) in Divine, Philoſophi-

cal,

cal, Polemical, and other *learned Studies*, which he thought might be helpful to him in the *Work of the Miniſtry*.

After this Account of himſelf, we need not be ſurprized to hear, that one of his Capacity, Learning, and Application, ſhould at length be able to ſay, as he did, "that there were *very* "*few*, if any of the *Books*, wrote by the an-"tient *Greeks*, and handed down to our Times, "but what *he had read* in their own Language." Hereby he acquired great Skill, and a happy Dexterity, in taking *Spoils from the Heathens*, and bringing them into *the Service of the Sanctuary*. The *Greek* being the Language in which the *New Teſtament* was originally written, he was peculiarly careful to be more *Maſter of that*, than of any other *Tongue of the Gentiles* whatever. And the LORD helped him to make *a wiſe and faithful Uſe* of all his *critical Knowledge* in that, or any other of the learned Languages.

In his Account of Things, *Time* was a moſt precious *Talent*. This he improved by great Diligence *in his Study*, and by a chearful unwearied *Attendance* upon the *publick* and ſtated, as well as *private* and occaſional *Functions* of his *Paſtoral Office*. He took the Pains to *read over* the Works, both of the *Greek* and *Latin Fathers*; and patiently ſubmitted to the tedious Drudgery of getting a pretty full Knowledge of the artful and corrupt Writings of the *Adverſaries of the Truth*, whether of former or later Times; particularly thoſe of *Bellarmin*, of *Thomas Aquinas*, and others of chief Note in the

Church

Church of Rome. Hence he was able to ſet the State of the *Controverſy* between the *Proteſtants* and the *Papiſts*, in a clear Light: And when he had preſſed the moſt ſpecious Arguments and Objections againſt the *Proteſtant Religion*, with all the Weight the *Adverſaries themſelves* could urge them, he was ſo richly furniſhed with the *Doctrines of Scripture*, and the *great Things which GOD has written to us in his Law*, that by *the Hammer* and *Spirit* of *the Word* he could, under the Divine Authority, with great Judgment and a very forcible Way of Reaſoning, utterly *demoliſh the whole Fabrick* treacherouſly erected by the *Antichriſtian Builders*.

His Zeal for the *Proteſtant Doctrines* of the *Reformation*, and his Care in his *Preaching* to lay low the *Haughtineſs of Men*, to exalt the *Riches of Free Grace*, and to guard againſt all *Antinomian*, as well as *Arminian* and *Arian Errors*, were well known to You who had the Privilege of *his ſtated Miniſtry*, and clearly manifeſted in the Part he bore in the *Merchant's* antient *Lecture* at *Pinners-Hall*, and in the Lord's Day Evening *Catechetical Exerciſes*, which for ſome Years were carried on in *Lime-Street*, and of late at *Little St. Helen's*.——His uniform Zeal was diſcovered alſo in his private *Lectures in Divinity* to the Students in the *Academy* at *Plaiſterer's-Hall*.——And I cannot but ſuppoſe, that many of you are acquainted with the excellent little Piece upon *the Godhead* of CHRIST, entitled, *The Exalted Saviour*; which he wrote

at

at a Time, when *Arianiſm* was *coming in like a Flood*, even among the *Diſſenters*.

I ſhall only add concerning him, that they who were moſt intimately acquainted with him, eſteemed him to be *a good Pattern* of real and univerſal *Benevolence* to Mankind, eſpecially to the Souls of Men; of true *Goſpel-Charity*, or unfeigned *Love* to the Brotherhood, and of *Chriſtian Forbearance* towards all that needed it: While at the ſame Time he was in a very humble, becoming, and exemplary Manner *valiant for the Truth*, ſtanding up in the faithful Publication and Defence of it to the End of his Days. And You, with All that knew him, muſt allow, that he has ever acted agreeable to the Profeſſion he made, above Thirty Years ago, in his *Dedication to this Church*, of that excellent and judicious Piece of his before mentioned: In which he ſays expreſsly, "I have never been "ſhy, or ſhunned to diſcloſe the Counſels of "GOD; nor do I ſeek to ſhelter and cloak my "Opinions in ambiguous Phraſes, and unſatisfactory Expreſſions: But, after painful Stu"dy, and diligent Diſquiſition, what unqueſ"tionably to me appears to be the Mind and "Meaning of GOD, with all Frankneſs I readily "repreſent unto you, in the propereſt and plain"eſt Words I can chooſe moſt clearly to re"veal, and moſt determinately to diſtinguiſh "my Senſe." A noble Pattern! Highly worthy of the Imitation of *All the Miniſters* of JESUS CHRIST. And you that heard his heavenly Diſcourſe, delivered to this Church but

a very

a very few Hours before his Death, upon thoſe Words in 1 *Pet.* v. 7. *Caſting all your Care upon Him, for He careth for you* (in which, as it now appears, Providence had allotted he ſhould give his ſolemn *parting Advice* to the Congregation:) You, I am perſwaded, can think no other, but that *when his Lord came, He found him ſo doing.*

Theſe Things I have mentioned, not to *extol* the Name or Memory of *the Deceaſed*, but to *exalt* the *rich* and *free Grace* of GOD; to the humble *Admiration* whereof, you know, *your faithful Paſtor* both by his Inſtructions, and his Example, did conſtantly invite you. For he was forward to *acknowledge* expreſsly, as the *Apoſtle* did, with Regard to all his abundant Labours, *Yet not I, but the Grace of GOD which was with me (c).*

And if any of us have ſeen and *taſted that the Lord is gracious (d)*, we cannot but own with the like holy *Admiration*, that it is *rich Grace indeed*, which GOD beſtows upon *all His faithful Servants.* It is *Grace* and *Favour*, that gives them *all their Talents*, and all their Inclination or Opportunity of improving them. It is *free Grace*, which firſt *makes them faithful*, and then *keeps them ſo*; which ſtrengthens them in all their Duty, Work, and Service, and in all their Attempts to honour GOD: Surely then it muſt be *rich Grace*, which *through the Redemption that is in Jeſus Chriſt*, mercifully *accepts* and highly *promotes* the *faithful Servant*;

(c) 1 Cor. xv. 10, (d) 1 Pet. ii. 3.

who at beſt was but *unprofitable*, and whoſe Language to Eternity will be anſwerable to that of *the royal Prophet*, when he ſaid to the LORD, *All Things come of Thee, and of thine own have we given Thee (e).* This will for ever be the Declaration, which *all the Saints* will humbly make before GOD, "We never had any Thing "but what was thine own, wherewith to ſerve "or honour Thee." And when *Glory* ſhall at laſt be conferred upon that *bleſſed Servant*, whom *Grace alone* had rendered *faithful*, what can be ſaid, but that ſuch is the marvellous Loving Kindneſs, and ſuch the boundleſs Mercy of GOD to his Servants, that they *receive Grace for Grace*, that is, a *gracious Reward* after a *Faithfulneſs* in His Service, which His *Grace alone* could produce. And as it will *to Eternity*, ſo let it *now* be the joyful *Shout* of the Saints, *Grace, Grace (f)*: For as *Grace* laid *the Foundation*, ſo *Grace* muſt lay *the Head-Stone*, in the great Work of Man's Salvation.——But to conclude,

5. *Laſtly*, By what we have heard we are *bound* to be *faithful in All Things*.

It is our Duty to be *faithful*, in every Situation and Circumſtance in Life; *faithful to GOD*, and *faithful to Man*. Here remember, though none can be *faithful to GOD*, unleſs it be their daily Study, Care, and Practice to be *faithful unto Men*; yet Perſons may be *faithful unto Men*, ſo far as human Laws are concerned, and not be

(e) 1 Chron. xxix. 14. (f) Zech. iv. 7.

be *faithful unto GOD:* But if we would be *GOD's Servants*, and be counted *faithful*, we muſt be upright in All Things; *ſeeking firſt the Kingdom of GOD, and His Righteouſneſs* (*g*); *doing every thing heartily, as unto the Lord* (*h*); *living, not unto ourſelves, but unto Him who died for us* (*i*); and endeavouring to make the *beſt Improvement* of our Health and Strength, and all our Talents.

Particularly, both the *Word* and *Providence* of GOD do unitedly call upon us, to *redeem our Time* (*k*); and *not to be ſlothful* in the important Concerns of GOD's Glory and our own Salvation, but to be *fervent in Spirit, ſerving the Lord* (*l*) with the utmoſt Diligence; for *the Night cometh, wherein no Man can work* (*m*): And we ſee, it may come *very ſuddenly*.—— Lamenting therefore paſt Unfaithfulneſs, let us endeavour to make *a better Uſe* than ever *of the Lord's Day*, and of thoſe Hours in *every Day*, which ought to be *ſacred* to the Worſhip of GOD, and the Exerciſes of Religion. Be careful to *glorify GOD in your Body, and in your Spirit* (*n*), to *honour Him with your Subſtance* (*o*), and with all your Talents, and to *walk in the Fear of the Lord* at all Times. And as thoſe who wait for his Coming, *gird up the Loins of your Mind, be ſober, and hope to the End, for the Grace that is to be brought* unto every Believer *at the Revelation of Jeſus Chriſt* (*p*). Finally,

(*g*) Mat. vi. 33. (*h*) Col. iii. 23. (*i*) 2 Cor. v. 15.
(*k*) Eph. v. 16. (*l*) Rom. xii. 11. (*m*) John ix. 4.
(*n*) 1 Cor. vi. 20. (*o*) Prov. iii. 9. (*p*) 1 Pet. i. 13.

Finally, my Brethren, *ſtand faſt in the Lord (q), holding Faith and a good Conſcience (r).* And " as Your Watchman thought it his Duty in Faithfulneſs, (as he himſelf told You in his *Dedication*,) to forecaſt for your Safety, and upon Apprehenſion of approaching Evils to blow the Trumpet in *Zion:* So do You think it yours to take the Alarm, and carefully guard againſt all threatning Dangers which ariſe from infectious Principles, as well as thoſe that for ever accompany irreligious Practices." And let me beſeech You, in the Words of the Apoſtle, that You *forſake not the aſſembling of yourſelves together*, but *provoke one another unto Love and good Works (s).* Watch againſt all Diſſenſions and Diviſions, and *endeavour to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace (t).* Be not *Children, toſſed to and fro with every Wind of Doctrine (u)*, but let *your Heart be eſtabliſhed with Grace (w).* Let every one that has ſate under the *Doctor's Miniſtry*, and every one of us now before the LORD, ever dread to *compaſs GOD about with Lies and Deceit (x):* But let us plead for *Grace*, to make us *faithful with the Saints*; and being *found ſo* at our LORD's Coming, we ſhall aſſuredly be *eternally bleſſed*, and ſhall *receive a Crown of Life.* AMEN.

(q) Phil. iv. 1. (r) 1 Tim. i. 19. (s) Heb. x. 24, 25. (t) Eph. iv. 3. (u) Eph. iv. 14. (w) Heb. xiii. 9. (x) Hoſ. xi. 12.

BRITISH MUSEUM

FINIS.

A

Funeral Oration,

Spoken over the

GRAVE

Of the Reverend

Dr. ZEPHANIAH MARRYAT,

By *THOMAS TOWLE.*

HAD another, an elder or a fitter Perſon been appointed for *this* Service it would have been pleaſing to me and I am perſuaded much more advantageous to you: But as *my Regard for him at whoſe Grave we now ſtand*, with *the repeated Requeſt of his Relict and Family* brought me hither, I preſume no one will put an unfavourable Conſtruction on my appearing on this Occaſion, though I am ſo much *his Junior*, and was not many Years ago *his Pupil*.

Time would fail me was I to enter minutely into the Character of *this truly great and excellent Man*, nay in ſo doing I ſhould act *inconſiſtent with his own Diſpoſition*, ſince he neither

deſir'd nor eſteem'd the Applauſes of Men. However I am of Opinion that *his peculiarly publick Station in Life*, and *the many Obligations I am under to him* would render *my entire Silence upon this Head* very unreaſonable, very criminal.

He was favoured by Heaven with uncommonly excellent *natural Abilities*. For a quick Apprehenſion, a fruitful Imagination, a ſolid Judgment, a retentive Memory, with a peculiarly lively and nervous Elocution, he had (I think I do not expreſs myſelf too ſtrongly when I ſay) not *many Equals*, hardly *any Superiors*. Such Parts as theſe are indeed often a Snare tempting thoſe who are diſtinguiſhed with them to Sloth and Indolence, but *thus* they were no Snares or Temptations to him; for he was not only a Man of great Abilities, but of ſo uncommon *Application*, that he has been frequently heard to ſay, that in the younger Part of Life it was uſual with him to ſtudy *twelve*, ſometimes *fourteen*, nay *ſixteen* Hours every Day. From *theſe* Abilities, and from *this* Application, great Things (by the Bleſſing of God) might well be expected. Accordingly he did attain to a very large Extent of *Knowledge both humane and divine*, to *ſo* great a Share of it, that (if my Information be right, and I have the utmoſt Reaſon to think it is) he has been ſpoken of as *an uncommon Scholar* by ſome who are even to this Day among *the brighteſt Ornaments* of the learned World.

Theſe Abilities, and *theſe* Acquirements were happily *ſanctified*. The God of *Nature* and *Providence*

Providence beſtow'd them, and as *the GOD of Grace* gave them *a ſpiritual and religious Turn. This* being the Mercy of *our deceaſed Friend*, he (though he might, and without doubt would have appear'd in *the other learned Profeſſions* with great Advantage) choſe rather the more difficult and arduous Character of a *Divine*, preferring the too much deſpiſed though very honourable Name of *Miniſter of the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt*, to that of *the able Lawyer*, or *the skilful Phyſician*.

For many Years he ſuſtain'd *this* Character in great *Obſcurity*, but even *then* he diſcharg'd his Duty in ſuch a manner as gain'd him an high Place in the Eſteem of thoſe who knew his Perſon and attended his Labours. Nor during *that Period of Retirement* was his Worth confin'd to *his own Congregation*, ſo far from it, that he gave *the World* a Specimen of his Abilities as *a Divine*, by publiſhing, in Defence of one of the moſt important Articles of our holy Religion, *the proper Divinity of our bleſſed Saviour*, at a Time when it met with peculiar Contempt and Oppoſition *.

At length it pleas'd God to *call him from that Retirement*, in which he would willingly have ſpent the Remainder of his Days: Nor was *this* at all to his Diſcredit; for he approv'd himſelf *as a Preacher* to many of the moſt judicious and experi-

* In the above Paragraph I refer to that little Piece which the Doctor publiſhed in the Year 1719, and which was very juſtly entitled, *The exalted Saviour*; for therein our divine Mediator was exalted indeed.

enc'd Chriſtians in *the neighbouring Metropolis* *. And truly I cannot help taking this Opportunity of ſaying, that notwithſtanding *the Diſadvantage with which the Manner of his Delivery was attended*, it was ſcarcely poſſible (ſuch were the Sprightlineſs of his Thoughts, the Propriety of his Ideas, the Aptneſs of his Figures, and the Energy of his Expreſſions) for any one who heard him with Seriouſneſs and Attention, to go away without Improvement. And *this* was the leſs to be wonder'd at, as his Heart was very deeply impreſs'd with a Senſe of the Excellency and Importance of his Work, ſo impreſs'd with it, that he dreaded the Thought of being laid aſide from miniſterial Service. And it pleaſed the Sovereign Diſpoſer of Life and Death to gratify his Servant, by continuing him employed and active to *the very laſt*; for as to him *Preaching* and *Dying* were at the Diſtance of only *a few Hours* from each other.

But the Character of *a Miniſter* was not *the only one* for which Providence had furniſh'd or deſign'd him. Accordingly on the Deceaſe of a very learned and excellent Perſon †, who had directed the Studies of young Men educating for the Miniſtry, (being urged by *the repeated Sollicitations* of thoſe who then had the Direction of ſuch publick Concerns) he conſented to become *Divinity Profeſſor*. And as to his Behaviour in *that* important and difficult *Station*, I ſhall only ſay, that he ſo conducted himſelf as that he gain'd the Affections of all who ſtudied under him, and became (by the Bleſſing of God) happily

* This Oration was delivered at the Burial Ground belonging to the Doctor's Meeting-Place in *Southwark*.

† The late Reverend Mr. *John Hubbard*.

happily ſucceſsful for ſending into the Miniſtry ſeveral *able* and uſeful *Miniſters of the New Teſtament.*

His *Temper* was naturally inclin'd to Chearfulneſs and Pleaſantry, and *this* indeed expos'd him to the Cenſures of *the Sour and Ill-natur'd*, but gain'd him the Eſteem of *thinking* Perſons; as well it might, ſince his Pleaſantry and Chearfulneſs plainly ſhew'd that he was free from thoſe unreaſonable and odious Deſigns which are often conceal'd under an auſtere Look and demure Behaviour.

In *civil Life* he behav'd with an amiable and engaging Propriety, approving himſelf to all who took Notice of his Conduct, the indulgent Huſband, the tender Parent, the good Maſter, and the faithful Friend.

When he came to *the Cloſe of Life*, he was *reſign'd*, nay *chearful.* He was ſo far freed from *the Fear of Death*, that he ſpoke of it in Terms of the utmoſt Familiarity, and even when that Blow was given which ended in the Diſſolution of his mortal Frame, he ſtill retain'd the ſame Compoſure and Chearfulneſs of Spirit, ſaying, "That he was going to *Heaven*;" and (with a Smile upon his Countenance) asking *a Friend* who ſtood near him "If he would ac-"company him thither;" thus ſuggeſting how largely he partook of the Serenity and Benevolence of *that* happy Region.

Such was *the excellent Man* to whoſe *Interment* we are now Witneſſes. And what remains? but that adoring the Sovereignty of that great Being

Being *who takes away whom, when,* and *as* he pleaſes, we endeavour to collect from *his Removal* all thoſe Hints which ſo ſtriking and alarming a Providence is ſuited to ſuggeſt.

You, my dear Friend, who had the Honour of ſtanding in the Relation of *a Son* to this excellent Perſon, will, I am perſuaded, permit me to take this Opportunity of reminding you that you ſhould account it an ineſtimable Mercy to have deſcended from ſuch *a Parent*, and that you ſhould be thankful to God who continued him with you till your Arrival at Manhood, and Settlement in Life; but then you will allow me to ſuggeſt alſo, that *theſe* Favours (if you miſimprove them) will be attended with unſpeakably alarming and dreadful Conſequences. Let it then be your Concern to *be a Follower of* your deceaſed Father, *as far as he was a Follower of Chriſt*, for no farther, I am firmly perſuaded, would he have *advis'd*, or *wiſh'd* you to follow him.

As I ſee *many of his Church and Congregation* come to attend their deceaſed Miniſter to *his long Home*, it ſurely would be inexcuſable ſhould I neglect ſaying, that his Removal loudly, very loudly addreſſes *them*. Do you ask me, *my Chriſtian Friends*, what are the Leſſons you ſhould learn from it? The Anſwer is obvious. You ſhould be quicken'd in *Thankfulneſs* to God who ſettled ſo excellent a Man among you, continued him with you, even notwithſtanding he had Offers in a ſecular Way much more advantageous,

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and made his Miniſtrations of any Advantage to your Souls. You ſhould be awaken'd to an *Enquiry*, whether there have not been thoſe Sins found among you which have haſt'ned his Removal? You ſhould be excited to *lament* every particular in which you have ſlighted or miſimproved his valuable Labours. And now he is gone, and *the Places which knew him ſhall know him no more*, you ſhould be quicken'd to act in juſt ſuch a Manner as it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe he would adviſe you to demean yourſelves, was he now to riſe from his Grave and ſpeak to you. Particularly you ſhould be ſtirr'd up to adhere ſtedfaſtly to *thoſe ſacred Principles of evangelical Truth*, which he thoroughly believed, and zealouſly defended, to continue together without *dividing*, and without *diſperſing*; to exerciſe a ſteady Faith in that Jeſus, who (though *under Shepherds die) lives the great Shepherd* of his Church ſtill; and to ſeek to him that he would introduce and ſettle among you *a Workman that needeth not to be aſham'd, rightly dividing the Word of Truth*, leaving *the Time* and *Way* of doing it to his own infinite Wiſdom and Grace.

Since *many of you who were under his Care with a View to the Miniſtry* are, I obſerve, collected on *this* mournful Occaſion, I cannot help making thus publickly, an honourable Mention of that dutiful, and affectionate Manner in which I have often heard him with Pleaſure ſay you behav'd towards him while he was among you; and I think it my Duty to remind you alſo, that

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it is now incumbent on you, to give Evidence that your Affection for him has not died with him, by endeavouring to imitate him in every Thing amiable and praiſe-worthy, eſpecially in *that cloſe Application to Study* for which he was eminent, and from whence alone, under God, you can form a reaſonable Hope of *being* and *doing* what he *was*, and what he *did*. And while I would have *you* improve the preſent Providence, I would have *my own Soul* ſo far improve it, as to be quicken'd by the Removal of one whom I ſo dearly lov'd, to greater Diligence and Zeal in *working while it is Day*, *as* not knowing how ſoon *the Night may come* upon *me*; *that Night in which no Man can work*. Surely what is now beheld ſuggeſts many inſtructive and important Leſſons to *all preſent*. It ſhould lead us *all* to *hate Sin*, to which it is owing that Death is known in our World. It ſhould excite us to *love the Lord Jeſus*, *who has aboliſhed Death*, *and brought Life and Immortality to Light by his Goſpel*. It ſhould awaken us to endeavour *the beſt Improvement* of the Labours of our Miniſters while we enjoy them, ſince the Inſtance before us plainly ſhows, that *the very ableſt Preachers* are equally mortal with *thoſe who hear them*. It ſhould excite to conſtant *Prayer*, that He who has the Stores of Omnipotence at his Diſpoſal, would pour out *a double Portion of his Spirit* on *ſurviving Miniſters*, and on *thoſe who are training up* to ſuſtain that important and honourable Character. And it ſhould enliven us to be earneſt

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in our Addreſſes at the Throne of Grace, that we may be *prepar'd* to meet Death at *what Time*, or in *what Way* ſoever it comes to us. And let *thoſe of us who have good Ground to hope that we are in ſome meaſure prepar'd* for that great Alteration which we ſee daily paſſing on our Fellow-Creatures, learn from what we ſee to conclude, that the Troubles of this mortal Life ſhall not laſt always, but that as certainly as our deceaſed Friend *has*, we *ſhall* have our Diſmiſſion from the preſent State of Sin and Changes: *Our* Souls, like *his*, ſhall wing their Way to the World of Glory, and our Bodies ſhare in the Triumphs of that bleſſed Morning when *this breathleſs Corps*, over which we now ſtand, and when *the Bodies of all Believers* ſhall be raiſed, by the Almighty Power of their returning *Saviour*, from the Duſt of Death, glorious and immortal. *Seeing then that we look for ſuch Things, let us be diligent, that we may be found of him in Peace, without Spot, and blameleſs*; and till the Arrival of that bleſſed Period, *let us, my beloved Brethren, be ſtedfaſt, immoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, as knowing that then* it will appear with Honour to God, and Tranſport to ourſelves, that *our* feeble and undeſerving *Labours have not been in vain.*

FINIS.

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